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PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Docket number (Optional)

To the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks:
Transmitted herewith for filing under 35 U.S.C. 111 and 37 CFR 1.53 is the patent application of

entitled Franchise Business System of Retail Stores with
Internet.

Enclosed are .

- ☒ 8 pages of written description, claims and abstract.
☒ 4 sheets of drawings.
☒ an assignment of the invention to _____
☒ executed declaration of the inventors.
☐ a certified copy of a _____ application.
☐ associate power of attorney
☒ a verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 1.27.
☐ Information disclosure statement
☐ preliminary amendment
☐ other: _____

CLAIMS AS FILED

	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	FEE
BASIC FEE			\$ 690.00	\$ 345.00
TOTAL CLAIMS	- 20 =		X	
INDEPENDENT CLAIMS	- 3 =		X \$ 0	
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM PRESENT			\$ 0	
NUMBER EXTRA MUST BE ZERO OR LARGER			TOTAL	\$ 345.00
If applicant has small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 1.27, then divide total fee by 2, and enter amount here.			SMALL ENTITY TOTAL	\$ 345.00

- ☒ A check in the amount of \$ 345.00 to cover the filing fee is enclosed.
☐ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge and credit Deposit Account
 No. _____ as described below. I have enclosed a duplicate copy of this sheet.
☐ Charge the amount of \$ _____ as filing fee
☐ Credit any overpayment
☐ Charge any additional filing fees required under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17.
☐ Charge the issue fee set in 37 CFR 1.18 at the mailing of the Notice of Allowance, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.311(b).

June 30, 2000.

Date

Tetsuro Yoshioka
Signature

Tetsuro YOSHIOKA

Typed or printed name

2-15-22 Bancho, Takamatsu-City,
Kagawa Prefecture,
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Address

Applicant : Tetsuro YOSHIOKA

Serial No. :

Filed :

For :

VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING
SMALL ENTITY STATUS
(37 CFR 1.9(f) and 1.27(b)) INDEPENDENT INVENTOR

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9 (c) for purposes of paying reduced fees under section 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, to the Patent and Trademark Office with regard to the invention entitled _____ described in

☒ the specification filed herewith

☐ application serial no. _____, filed _____

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 35 CFR 1.9 (d) or a non-profit organization under 37 CFR 19 (e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed or am under obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below :

☒ No such person, concern, or organization exists

☐ Each such persons, concerns or organizations listed below*

*NOTE : Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

☐ INDIVIDUAL ☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN ☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
☐ INDIVIDUAL ☐ SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN ☐ NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

I acknowledge the duty to file , in this application or patent , notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying , or at the time of paying , the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate.

(37 CFR 1.28(b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both , under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code , and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon .

Tetsuro YOSHIOKA

Name of inventor

Tetsuro Yoshiooka
Signature of Inventor

June 30, 2000.

Date

SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Franchise Business System of Retail Stores with Internet

BACK GROUND OF THE INVENTION

The Invention, regarding electronic shopping system of franchise system by retailers, shall be included in the technology field of Electronic Commerce (EC) with Internet. In various industries recently, companies and stores create virtual stores with Home Pages in Internet, and through them, they receive purchase orders.

Incidentally , in this type of electronic shopping system, it is very important to create Home Pages, which will be attractive to common consumers and that will be able to stimulate consumers' purchasing desires. Further more, it is necessary to present every time a variety of goods, enough to satisfy the high and different demands of the consumers.

Needless to say, the cost required in order to create effective Home Pages and maintain them is much higher for medium/small sized enterprises or retail shops, than for big companies. The introduction of such a system is hard for them, since the range of the goods to be displayed is limited. Even if they decide to start the EC System on their own, it may be difficult to obtain satisfactory effects. Therefore, we have thought about the practical franchise system for music records retailers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Music record retailers shall get together and organize a Franchise System, which will establish the Headquarter for Internet business. Also, the Headquarter will set up the Server for Internet (hereafter, referred to as " H. Server.") . Both Franchise

Stores and the Members collected by Franchise Stores individually will have each Server (hereafter, referred to as " F. Server" and "M. Server" respectively.) connected with H. Server via Internet. H. Server shall consist of the following data and systems.

Merchandise Information Memory Data, will be gathering information of various goods (hereafter, referred to "Goods") including records, CD, MD, Music Tape, Video Tape and DVD, etc. which are sold by Franchise Stores.

Home Page Creation System, will be realized through several ways: the system will be able to read the Merchandise Information Memory Data and get all the necessary merchandise information. At the same time, it will be able, through each Store's Home page Data Memory System, to collect each Store's Home Page Data, as well as the Franchise Store ID System.

Home Page Sending Service, will be used in order to send the Home Page, including information, gathered from Merchandise Information Memory Data.

Order Receiving System, will facilitate the realization of orders from the Members, through the Home Page.

Received Data Transfer System, will enable the transfer of the Order Data (received by the Order Receiving System), to the "F. Server" identified by Member Store ID System. The order data will be including the buyer's name and the ordered items.

Franchise Store ID System will facilitate the identification of a franchise store to which the Members concerned belong, with the time that Members or non-Members have accessed. The System shall identify the Franchise Store to which the Member concerned belong, based on the URL set up in advance according to the defined rules.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

We explain how the Invention is executed as follows;

A. Figure 1 shows the structure outline of electronic shopping system concerned with

the Invention. The System 1 consists of H. Server 10 owned by the Headquarter of Franchise System, F. Server 20-20 (only one is in the Figure) owned by the Franchise Stores of the Franchise System, M. Server 30-30 (only one is in the Figure) owned by the Members collected by the Franchise Stores and Internet 40 connecting all of them.

B. In H. Server 10, various Data Bases are equipped. Among them, Data Base 11 is Goods Master in which all merchandise data, such as records/CD/other goods related with the System, are cataloged. The contents 12-12 are packaged to classify such entered goods in Master 11 into, for example, musician group, music category group and best sellers group, etc.

C. Data Base 13 is the data base for Member Entry, where the members collected by each member store in Franchise System are cataloged. Concretely speaking, as shown in Fig. 2, for every member, the ID No., Password, Franchise Store Code, Branch Code (if the member belongs to the certain branch of the Franchise Store), Terminal ID Code called "Cookie" used by H. Server to identify if the member's Server 30 are entered. Data Base 14 is the data base for Franchise Store entry. As shown in Fig. 3, as the data of every Franchise Store, Store Code and Branch Code (if any) are entered. When the Franchise Agreement has made between the Store and the Headquarter, such data is cataloged in Franchise Store Data Base 14 of H. Server.

D. Data Base 15 is for entering the Home Page data of each Franchise Store. As shown in Fig. 4, for instance, the Home Data including the store name logos used in creating Home Page, Figures for Home Pages and Branch List of Franchise Stores, etc. are entered.

E. In excess, we explain the operating procedure of the Franchise Business System, concerning the execution, according to the Flow Chart of Fig. 5. The Flow Chart shows the communication between M. Server 30 and H. Server 10. When you use the System, a Member shall make its own M. Server 30 (PC) connect via the provider using the phone cable first (Step S1) in order to activate Internet Browser. Then, the Member shall input the URL obtained in advance to access the System concerned (Step S3). In such a case, there are two kinds of URLs--- the one is common in the whole system and the other is classified by each Franchise Store. For example, let's look at the <http://www.abc. xyz.co.jp>, which is for the Franchise Store. The part of " abc"

identifies the Member Store, while the URL without "abc" is used commonly in the whole System. In any case, the Member shall be connected with H. Server 10 by "xyz.co.jp." (Step S4). At that time, H. Server 10 shall judge whether the access is the first or the second one and so on, by confirming the Terminal ID Code added to the Server in the Member's first access from Server 30 (Step S5). If it is the first access, Member ID No. and Password are requested to be added. The H. Server shall recognize whether the access is from the Member or not, by comparing such input data with the Members' Data cataloged in Member's Data Base 13. (Step S6, S7).

F. In that step, the above Member ID No. and Password had been obtained by the Members when they applied for the entry at the Franchise Store and such data had been cataloged in Member Data Base 13 of H. Server 10, based on the notice from the Store. When such an ID No. or Password is different from what has been cataloged, or when there was no input, H. Server judges that the access is from non-members and displays the Home Page for guests (Step S8). However, when the Server judges that the input Member ID No. and Password are what has already been entered, and that the access from M. Server 30 is the second one (or third, fourth one), the H. Server 10 has to decide whether or not the above URL is the specific one for each Member Store. (Step S9). If there is not "abc" part in the input URL and it is impossible to specify the Member Store by the URL, then, the H. Server demands the Client 30 again to input for identifying the Membership, based on Member Data Base 13, in order to recognize to which Member Store, the Member who has accessed, belongs. (Step S10).

G. Thus, having confirmed the Membership and Member Store, H. Server 10 shall next read the Home Page Data for Store Name Logo and Figures, shown in Fig. 4 for example, from Data Base 15 for Home Page. Then, it shall create a Home Page for the Member Store concerned, using the Data and Merchandise Data read out from Goods Master 11 and various contents 12---12, and shall send the Home Page to M. Server 30 (Step S11). Moreover, it shall obtain the Purchase Order Data including the Member's ID No., ordered goods, delivery way, how to receive the money, when M. Server 30 has processed a purchase order.(Step S12) In this way, when the order from a Member belonging to a Franchise Store has been received and processed, H. Server 10 shall transfer the received order data to F. Server 20 via Internet, including E-mails.

H. The Member Store, which has received it shall deliver the goods and receive the

money according to the transferred data, after having contacted directly the Member concerned. In such a case, if the Store has no stock of ordered goods, the Store is able to get the goods concerned from the Headquarter or through there. The EC using such Home Pages on Internet is executed in that way. In the System, each Member Store does not need to create/maintain/control its Home Page and is able to show the customized Home Page to its members. Moreover, each Store can supply many kinds of goods information, not only for its own stock items but also for other goods based on the huge scale of data in Headquarter.

I. Basically, in the execution form mentioned above, each Member Store shall be identified by the URL sent from M. Server. It is also possible for each Franchise Store to set the section to identify the Store in its Member's ID No./Password so that H. Server 10 may specify the Franchise Store based on the Member's ID No. or Password . Besides transferring the received order data to the Store via Internet, such data may also be sent by documents or in other transfer ways. The basic way is to create the customized Home Page for each Franchise Store, although you may omit the Home Page creation and operate the System.

With the Invention, as described above, H. Server shall identify the Store to which the Member belong, by the URL or ID No. input by the Member for example, when the Members collected by each store order some goods, through the Home Page created by Headquarter. Then, such received order data shall be transmitted to the identified Store. Therefore, the Franchise Store is able to execute EC with Internet, by delivering the goods to the Member concerned and receive the money from the Member according to the order data, even if the Store does not have its own Home Page. Especially, such a Store is able to use a huge volume of goods data and goods in stock owned by the Headquarter. Also, when any procedures related with copy rights of records/CD are required, the Headquarter shall do it for the Member Store, and each Store will enjoy executing EC efficiently at low costs. When a Member belonging to a Store has accessed H. Server via Internet, the customized Home Page is displayed to the Member and he/she feels as if he/she was trading directly with the Store to which he/she belongs , without awareness of the Headquarter.

Consequently, the Franchise Store concerned is able to appeal its existence more effectively and to promote its sales activity.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS :

[Claim1] All Record retailers shall get together and organize a Franchise System, in order to establish the Headquarter for Internet business. Also, the Headquarter will set up the servers for Internet (hereafter, referred to as "H. Server."). Both Franchise Stores and the Members collected by Franchise Stores -individually- will have each server (hereafter, referred to as "F. Server" and "M. Server respectively) connected with H. Server via Internet. The proposal is the "H. Server" to consist of the following data and systems:

- a. Merchandise Information Memory Data, will be gathering information of various goods (hereafter, referred to "Goods") including records, CD, MD, Music Tape, Video Tape and DVD, etc. which are sold by Franchise Stores.
- b. Home Page Creation System, will be realized through several ways: the system will be able to read the Merchandise Information Memory Data and get all the necessary merchandise information. At the same time, it will be able, through each Store's Home page Data Memory System, to collect each Store's Home Page Data, as well as the Franchise Store ID System.
- c. Home Page Sending Service, will be used in order to send the Home Page, including information, gathered from Merchandise Information Memory Data.
- d. Order Receiving System, will facilitate the realization of orders from the Members, through the Home Page.
- e. Received Data Transfer System, will enable the transfer of the Order Data (received by the Order Receiving System), to the "F. Server" identified by Member Store ID System. The order data will be including the buyer's name and the ordered items.
- f. Franchise Store ID System will facilitate the identification of a franchise store to which the Members concerned belong, with the time that Members or non-Members

have accessed. The System shall identify the Franchise Store to which the Member concerned belong, based on the URL set up in advance according to the defined rules.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 Configuration chart of Hardware associated with the execution form of the Invention.

Fig. 2 Configuration chart of Member Data Base used in the System.

Fig. 3 Configuration chart of Franchise Store Data Base.

Fig. 4 Configuration chart of Home Page Data Base for every Franchise store.

Fig. 5 Description chart of an example of Front Page in Home Page created by the System.

< Meaning of Symbols >

(10) Headquarter Server, (11) Goods Data Base, (13) Member Data Base, (14) Franchise

Data Base, (15) Data Base for Home Page Data, (20) Franchise Store's Server, (30)

Member's Server, (40) Internet

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

To provide such a System in which EC is available by Internet, without creating/maintaining/controlling a Home Page and by reducing the costs for goods

control.

Make the connection between Server 10 used by the Headquarter enlisting Franchise Stores and Client Server 30 used by the Member collected by Franchise Stores available through Internet 40. Moreover, the Server 10 is equipped with the functions to store Merchandise Information piling up goods data, to inform Franchise Stores when their Members have accessed and to receive orders from Members or non-Members placed through the Home Page.

Fig. 1

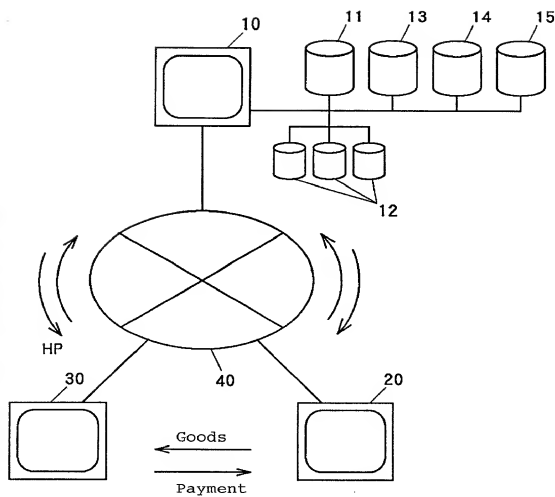


Fig. 2

Member ID No.	ABC - 12345
Password	XYZOOOO
Franchise Code	ABC
Branch Code	ABC - 01
	△△△△△

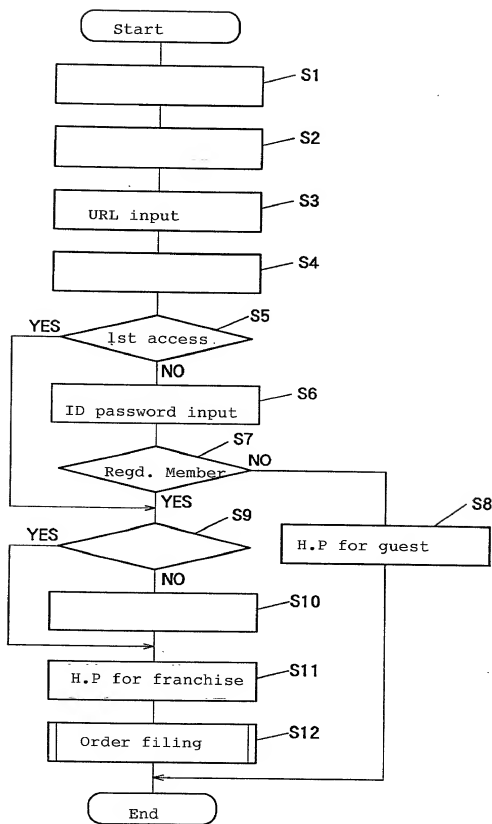
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Fig. 3

Franchise Code	ABC	
Headquarter	ABC - 00	高松市OOOO
Branch 1	ABC - 01	高松市XXXX
Branch 2	ABC - 02	:
Branch 3	ABC - 03	:
Branch 4	ABC - 04	:

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Fig. 5



DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that :

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled :

the specification of which

(Check one) ☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on _____ as
Application Serial No. _____
and was amended on _____

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed :

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Claimed

(Number)

(Country)

(Day/Month/Year filed)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, in so far as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code 112. I acknowledge the duty to

disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, 1.56 which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application :

(Application Serial No)

(Filing Date)

(Patented, Pending, Abandoned)

(Application Serial No)

(Filing Date)

(Patented, Pending, Abandoned)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first inventor Tetsuro YOSHIOKA

→ Inventor's signature Tetsuro Yoshiooka → Date June 30, 2000.

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Japan.

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Full name of second inventor _____

→ Inventor's signature _____ → Date _____

Residence _____

Post Office Address _____